

3 Forecasts

Population forecasts in state and local correctional facilities are essential for criminal justice budgeting and planning in Virginia. The forecasts are used to estimate operating expenses and future capital needs and to assess the impact of current and proposed criminal justice policies. In order to fulfill the requirements of Item 379 A of Chapter 806 of the 2013 Acts of Assembly, the Secretary of Public Safety completes offender population forecasts for the juvenile local-responsible (JDC) population, juvenile state-responsible (direct care) population, adult local-responsible jail population, and adult state-responsible inmate population.

To produce the forecasts, the Secretary of Public Safety utilizes an approach known as “consensus forecasting.” This process brings together policy makers, administrators, and technical experts from all branches of state government. The Technical Advisory Committee is composed of experts in statistical and quantitative methods from several agencies. While individual members of the committee generate the forecasts, the Technical Advisory Committee as a whole carefully scrutinizes each forecast according to the highest statistical standards.

Selected forecasts are presented to the Liaison Work Group, which evaluates the forecasts and provides guidance to the Technical Advisory Committee. The Liaison Work Group includes deputy directors and senior managers of criminal justice and budget agencies, as well as staff of the House Appropriations and Senate Finance Committees.

Forecasts accepted by the Liaison Work Group are then presented to the Policy Committee. Led by the Secretary of Public Safety, the Policy Committee reviews the various forecasts, making any adjustments deemed necessary to account for emerging trends or recent policy changes, and selects the official forecast for each offender population. The Policy Committee is made up of lawmakers, agency directors, and other top officials and includes representatives of Virginia’s law enforcement, prosecutor, police, sheriff, and jail associations. Through the consensus process, a separate forecast is produced for each of the four major correctional populations.

The forecasts, approved in September 2013, were based on the statistical and trend information known at the time they were produced. There is considerable uncer-

tainty regarding the future growth or decline of Virginia’s correctional populations. For instance, the duration of the current economic downturn and the timing and pace of recovery are not known. The depth and length of the economic recession may influence the numbers and types of crimes committed in the Commonwealth. Additionally, with both state and local governments forced to reduce spending, there may be shifts in the prioritization and deployment of law enforcement resources. Furthermore, selected prison facilities have been closed and various community corrections programs have been eliminated or downsized as a result of budget reductions. The forecast committees will continue to monitor the offender populations monthly in order to identify and analyze any changes as quickly as possible.

Summaries of the two juvenile population forecasts are presented in this section. For the full forecast report by the Secretary of Public Safety, view “Reports to the General Assembly” on Virginia’s Legislative Information System (lis.virginia.gov).

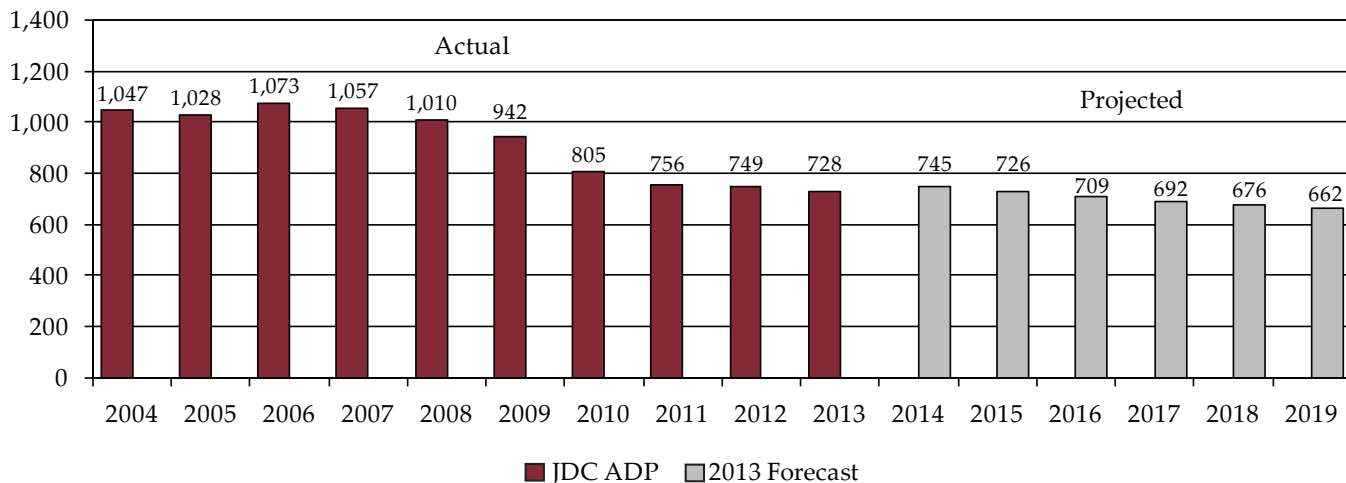
JDC Population

The juvenile local-responsible offender population encompasses all juveniles held in locally-operated JDCs within the Commonwealth. Local governments or multi-jurisdictional commissions operate JDCs throughout the Commonwealth to provide safe and secure housing for juveniles accused of felonies or Class 1 misdemeanors, and the Board of Juvenile Justice promulgates regulations for these facilities. DJJ, based on funding included in the Appropriation Act, provides up to half the cost of construction of JDCs and provides a portion of the cost of operations. Historically, the majority of JDC capacity has been utilized for the detainment of juveniles pending adjudication, disposition, or placement. Post-D detention may serve as an alternative to state commitment and is used by the courts primarily for juveniles with less serious offenses who require treatment in a secure setting. Post-D confinement cannot exceed 180 days.

Between FY 2004 and FY 2005, JDC ADP decreased from 1,047 to 1,028 juveniles, then increased to 1,073 in FY 2006. The ADP has decreased each FY since FY 2006. Between FY 2009 and FY 2010, the ADP decreased by 14.5% (the largest single-year decline) to 805 juveniles.



JDC ADP and Forecast, FY 2004-2019*



* Data do not match the official forecast report because data were updated since the official report was released.

In FY 2013, JDCs housed an average of 728 juveniles per day during the FY. While individual facilities may vary, JDC certified capacity statewide has not been fully utilized in recent FYs.

Juveniles with an intake for a felony, Class 1 misdemeanor, violation of a court order, or violation of probation/parole are eligible for placement in detention. The total number of juvenile intake cases has decreased in each of the last five FYs. In particular, the number of juvenile intakes eligible for detainment in a JDC decreased 29.8% between FY 2009 and FY 2013. Actual detention detainments decreased 22.0% during the same time period.

JDC Forecast

After careful evaluation of both the DJJ and the Department of Planning and Budget projections, the Policy Committee approved the DJJ projection as the official forecast of the juvenile JDC population in FY 2013. The Policy Committee did not identify indicators to suggest that the downward trend in the JDC population is ending or reversing. It is anticipated that this population will continue to decline overall throughout the forecast horizon. The ADP for FY 2019 is projected to be 662 juveniles.

Direct Care Population

The juvenile state-responsible offender population refers to the number of juveniles held in DJJ direct care. This population has been decreasing since FY 2000. ADP decreased from 859 in FY 2010 to 816 in FY 2011, a decrease of 5.0%. Between FY 2012 and FY 2013, ADP decreased by 8.3% to 695 juveniles. Since FY 2004, admis-

sions to direct care have decreased by 55.3%, from 993 to 444 in FY 2013. Some of the decline can be attributed to a July 1, 2000, change in the minimum criteria for a juvenile to be committed to DJJ (from a felony or two Class 1 misdemeanor adjudications to a felony or four Class 1 misdemeanors that were not part of a common act, transaction, or scheme). That policy change, however, cannot explain the persistent downward trend in commitments.

As mentioned in the previous section on the JDC population, the total number of juvenile intake cases has dropped for the past five FYs. In particular, felony intake cases decreased by 38.0% between FY 2009 and FY 2013.

Additionally, recent DJJ procedures may have affected intakes and admissions. DJJ has implemented procedures that emphasize the use of validated, structured

Both the direct care and JDC populations have been decreasing since FY 2004.

Population forecasts to FY 2019 for both groups project that the decrease will continue overall.



Juvenile Intake Cases by Most Serious Offense, FY 2009-2013*

Most Serious Offense at Intake	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Felonies Against Persons	3,253	2,784	2,534	2,333	2,098
Other Felonies	7,273	5,915	5,250	5,328	4,424
Class 1 Misdemeanors	27,185	24,451	23,151	21,597	18,258
Other (excluding status offenses)	15,014	13,877	13,390	13,409	13,235

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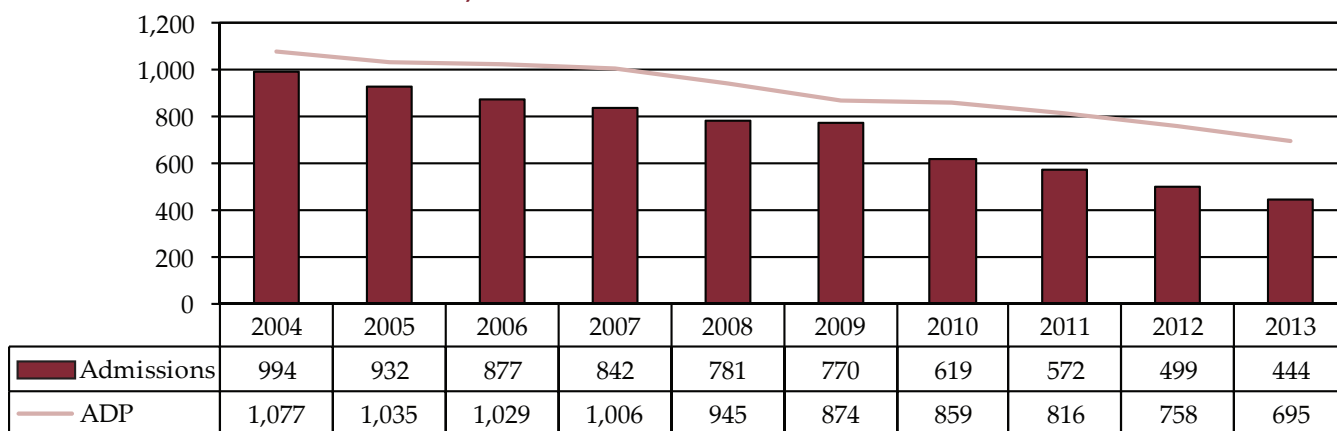
* Juveniles cannot be committed for status offenses.

decision-making tools in various aspects of community and direct care operations. Decision points include the initial decision to detain, the assignment to various levels of community probation or parole supervision, and the classification of committed juveniles within the facility setting. Tools include the DAI, YASI, and the custody classification forms. The DAI is designed to enhance consistency and equity in the decision to detain and to ensure that only those juveniles who represent a serious threat to public safety or failure to appear in court are held in secure pre-D detention. The YASI is an enhanced risk and needs assessment tool. The custody classification forms provide an objective classification system that enables staff to assess a juvenile's appropriate security and custody level, determine the most appropriate services and programs, assign juveniles to appropriate housing within the facility, and assess juveniles for placement in the community. Finally, DJJ has implemented procedures to address probation and parole violations with the goal of enhancing consistency and equity and ensuring that only those juveniles who represent a serious threat to public safety are confined.

While admissions are a critical factor driving the direct care population, LOS in DJJ facilities also affects the size of the population. The change in commitment criteria in 2000 meant that juveniles with a limited misdemeanor record could no longer be committed to DJJ; those juveniles historically had the shortest LOSs with DJJ. By removing juveniles with the shortest LOSs, the average LOS among the remaining juveniles is longer.

The composition of commitments has continued to change, and juveniles with longer assigned LOSs now make up a larger proportion of those received by DJJ. There are three categories of juvenile commitments: indeterminate commitments, determinate commitments, and blended sentences. For a juvenile with an indeterminate commitment, DJJ determines how long the juvenile will remain in a facility, up to a maximum of 36 months or until his or her 21st birthday. These juveniles are assigned an LOS range based on guidelines that consider the juvenile's current offenses, prior offenses, and length of prior record. Failure to complete a mandatory treatment program (e.g., substance abuse or sex offender treatment) or the commission of institutional offenses could prolong the actual LOS beyond the assigned

Direct Care Admissions and ADP, FY 2004-2013*

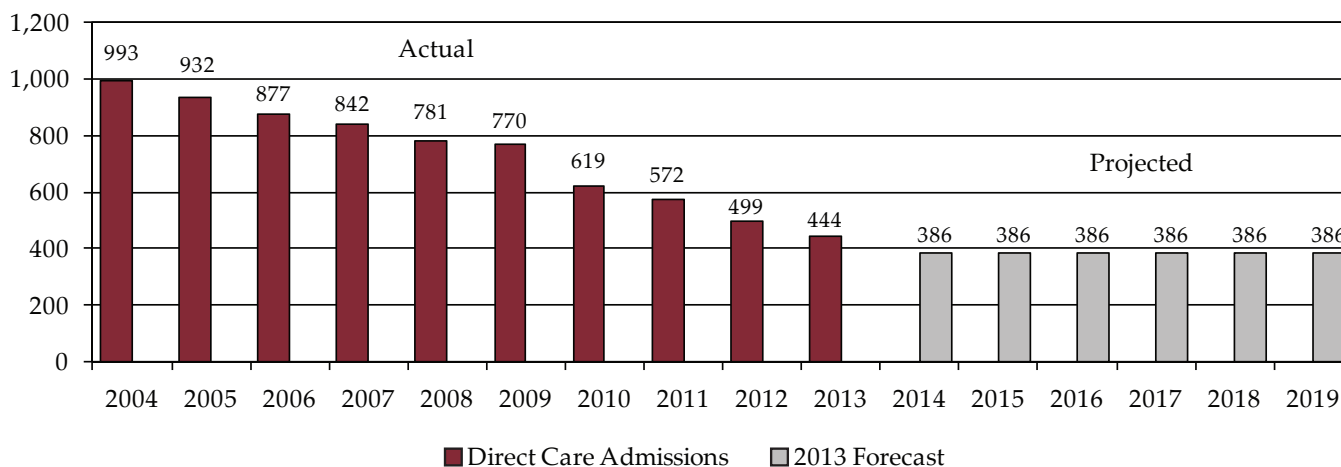


* The number of admissions reported in this section differs from the admissions reported in other sections of this report because data in this section include canceled, rescinded, and successfully appealed commitments.

* Data do not match the official forecast report because data were updated since the official report was released.



Direct Care Admissions Forecast, FY 2004-2019*



* The number of admissions reported in this section differs from the admissions reported in other sections of this report because data in this section include canceled, rescinded, and successfully appealed commitments.

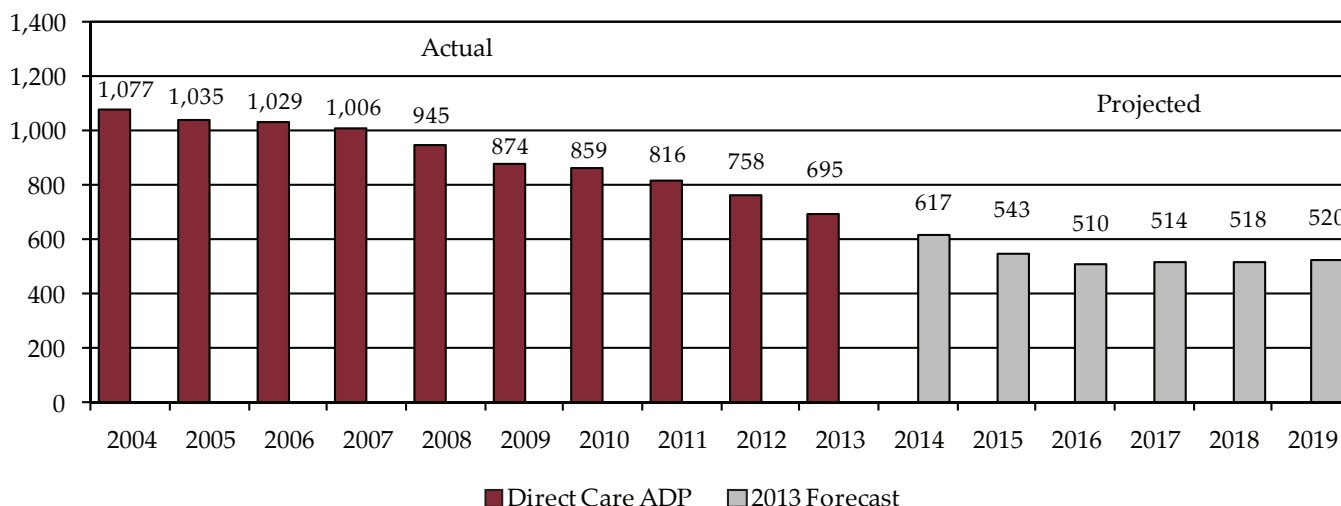
range. For a juvenile given a determinate commitment, the judge sets the commitment period to be served (up to age 21); however, the juvenile can be released at the judge's discretion prior to serving the entire term. Nonetheless, determinately committed juveniles remain in DJJ facilities longer, on average, than juveniles with indeterminate commitments. Finally, a juvenile given a blended sentence can remain at a DJJ facility up to age 21 before being transferred to DOC to serve the remainder of his or her term in an adult facility. Juveniles with determinate commitments and those with blended sentences now make up a larger share of admissions to DJJ. Commitment orders for determinate commitments and blended sentences increased from 11.5% of all admissions in FY 2004 to 17.8% of admissions in FY 2013.

As the percentage of admissions with longer LOSs has increased, the composition of the state's facilities has changed over time. Juveniles with longer LOSs (e.g., juveniles with an assigned LOS of 18 months or more on an indeterminate commitment, juveniles with a determinate commitment, and juveniles with a blended sentence) now make up a larger proportion of the direct care population compared to a decade ago.

Direct Care Forecast

Given the long-term downward trend in juvenile admissions, statistical models based on historical data are not useful tools in projecting future admissions. In four of the last eight annual reports, the Policy Committee

Direct Care ADP Forecast, FY 2004-2019*



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utilized the statistical projection for the early FY(s) of the forecast horizon and then assumed a flat admissions forecast for the remaining FYs of the forecast period.

For this year's forecast, the Policy Committee approved the use of the DJJ admissions forecast for FY 2014 and set a flat admissions forecast from FY 2015 through FY 2019. Under this forecast, it is assumed that admissions will continue to fall through FY 2014 and then will level off for the remainder of the forecast horizon.

The approved forecast suggests that the ADP in direct care will continue to decrease in the short term. The forecast projects a decline through FY 2016 when the population is expected to reach 510 juveniles. Beginning in FY 2017, however, the population of juveniles in direct care is expected to level off. This leveling can be attributed to the longer average LOSs of juveniles committed in the most recent FYs compared to those committed in prior FYs. By FY 2019, the direct care population is projected to be 520. Because admissions are an integral driver of the direct care population, the forecast committees will monitor admissions closely over the next FY.



